

Rural EZ/EC Community Successes



Quarterly Compilation for
April - June
1996

USDA
Rural Development
Office of Community Development
Empowerment Division



Rural Community Update for April, 1996

April 26, 1996

- Kentucky Highlands EZ (KHEZ), KY: \$125,250 Ounce of Prevention Program Grant; HS students businesses survey; Leadership Training seminar; Farm loans for Zone low-income growers; Alternative Crop Venture Fund underway.
- Mid Delta (Mississippi) EZ: \$445,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant to house Sporting World, Inc.; \$373,900 loan/grant for water/sewer system project.
- Greene/Sumter, AL: Drawdown agreement signed with state.
- Arizona Border Region EC, AZ: Rural Economic Development workshop.
- Watsonville CA Enterprise Community: AmeriCorps summer gleaning project.
- Crisp-Dooley EC, GA: Rural Life Community Development Center funded; Town and Country Early Learning center funded; Kids World Child Development Center funded.
- Lake County, MI EC: Excess government furniture delivered to schools; Six housing grants and one loan awarded.
- Central Savannah River Area (CSRA), GA: \$686,400 grant and \$73,000 loan for a sewage system; \$500,000 RBEG revolving loan fund.
- North Delta (MS) Enterprise Community: \$1,061,000 of loan/grant funds sewer system; \$1,316,900 Community Facilities loan funds rural health clinic.
- Robeson County EC, NC: Hired an EC Coordinator; First Title XX money drawn down; extensive leadership training project; \$128,850 RBEG extends sewer service.
- Halifax/Edgecombe/Wilson Rural EC, NC: Fund drawdown contract ratified.
- Greater Portsmouth EC, OH: National EZ/EC Learning Initiative.
- Southeast Oklahoma Enterprise Community: Tourism key element in economic and social revitalization efforts; Hugo Heritage Train and Hugo Railroad Museum and Depot; RBEG grant establishes Lake Hugo Marina; South Central Regional Technology Consortium (SCRTC) provides assistance.
- Scott/McCreary EC, TN: European Union reps evaluate empowerment concept.
- Beadle/Spink EC (BASEC), SD: BASEC hosts annual event.
- Accomack/Northampton EC, Virginia: Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park highlighted.
- McDowell County EC, (McCAN) WV: Financing and construction begin on transitional housing facility.
- Central Appalachia Empowerment Zone EC, WV: \$500,000 Small Cities Block Grant awarded to create a loan pool; Feasibility study on industrial sites planned.

April Rural EZ/EC Happenings

The Rural Zones

Kentucky Highlands EZ (KHEZ), KY: Clinton County, Kentucky has been selected by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to receive a \$125,250 Ounce of Prevention Program Grant. The grant to Clinton County was one of nine granted by HUD, but the only rural community to receive the grant. One hundred seventy five urban and rural communities competed for the grants which are intended to build on public safety and youth development efforts already underway. This grant will help the Clinton County School District keep area youth in school, on track toward graduation, and out of trouble.

Students at Jackson County High School assisted the EZ staff in conducting a survey as part of a marketing plan to recruit new businesses to the County and retain existing businesses. The survey will be used to determine the skills, educational plans and interests of the students as well as learn whether the students plan to stay in Jackson County or move away to find work.

The Clinton County EZ Board plans to schedule a two and one half day Leadership Training seminar early in May for as many as thirty-five participants from the community. Funding for the seminar comes from an Appalachian Regional Commission grant.

Last week the KHEZ announced the availability of farm loans for Zone low-income growers through the Production Loan Fund. Up to \$10,000 may be borrowed by low-income farmers (those with less than \$21,000 annual income) who are members of the Cumberland Farm Products, Inc., a marketing cooperative.

Also announced at the same time was the fact that the second year of funding of the KHEZ Alternative Crop Venture Fund was now underway. As many as 12 loans of up to \$2,500 each may be made to farmers who are willing to experiment with crops, techniques or livestock production that can expand the growers income in non-traditional areas.

Mid Delta (Mississippi) EZ: On Monday, April 22, 1996, three ceremonies were held to announce 4 USDA-funded projects. Jan Shadburn, Associate Administrator, Rural Housing Service, USDA, attended the ceremonies and made the project announcements. Another Mid-Delta EZ project was announced at a ceremony in Greenville. A \$445,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant (Rural Business Service funding) was awarded to the Washington County Board of Supervisors. The funds will be used along with leveraged funds to construct a building to house Sporting World, Inc., a business which produces custom art work for major national clients such as the Sierra Club and Ducks Unlimited. Fifteen jobs will be saved and 10 more created as a result of the project.

At a ceremony in Mound Bayou, a \$373,900 loan/grant project was announced for improvements to be made to the City of Mound Bayou water/sewer system. Mound Bayou is located in the Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone.

The Rural Enterprise Communities

Greene/Sumter, AL: The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, Lead Entity for the community was reviewed by AL Legislative Review Committee on April 8, 1996. A financial agreement is being circulated and is expected to be sign by the Governor with an effective date of April 15, 1996. The signing of this agreement will allow Greene/Sumter to drawdown Title XX Social Service Block Grant (SSBG) funds.

Arizona Border Region EC, AZ: Victor Vasquez, Acting Deputy Administrator for Community Development, spoke to approximately sixty individuals who participated in a workshop, "Alternatives in Rural Economic Development" on April 12, 1996. The workshop was held in San Luis, Arizona, one of three cities that make up the Arizona Border Region Enterprise Community.

The University of Arizona's Rural Health Office sponsored the workshop. Other participating organizations contributing to the workshop included, the Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC), the Arizona State Department of Commerce, the Arizona Community Action Agency Association, and the Western Arizona Council of Governments.

Mr. Vasquez also attended the San Luis Advisory Committee meeting, one of three governing bodies that constitute the Arizona Border Region Enterprise Community Advisory Committee.

Mr. Joel Viers, Arizona Border Region Enterprise Community (AZBREC) coordinator reported good attendance and active participation in the western most part of AZBREC during the week of April 8 through 12. The AZBREC Advisory Committee met in San Luis on April 11 to discuss current and future activities with the enterprise community. A workshop about alternatives in rural economic development took place the following day, also in San Luis.

Watsonville CA Enterprise Community: The Watsonville Enterprise Community received approval for an AmeriCorps summer gleaning project. In addition, the Kings County California Champion Community received approval for a summer gleaning project.

California Rural Development Enterprise Community Coordinator, Toni Symonds, coordinated efforts to expand the network of partners participating in the Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community Initiative. California Rural Housing Service, Ms. Symonds and the California Coalition for Rural Housing discussed EZ/EC and Champion Community participation in housing activities.

Crisp-Dooley EC, GA: In a special session, members of the Board of Directors awarded Federal EC funds to the St. Paul/Gillespie-Selden Rural Life Community Development Center, Inc. (24 hour child care facility) in Cordele, GA (\$132,000); Town and Country Early Learning center in Vienna, GA (\$100,000); and Kids World Child Development Center in Cordele, GA (\$70,000).

Central Savannah River Area (CSRA), GA: On April 8, 1996 the City of Keysville was

awarded a \$686,400 grant and \$73,000 loan for a sewage system. A \$500,000 RBEG was also announced for the CSRA EC to establish a revolving loan. The announcements were made at the Keysville City Hall where Laura Meadows, GA's RECD State Director and John Romano, Deputy Administrator Rural Utilities Service (RUS) provided guest comments and presented the checks. RECD was well represented with Program Directors, Community Development Managers and Rural Development Office personnel present.

Lake County, MI EC: Mae Locke, Rural Development EZ/EC Coordinator, delivered the second load of expended/excess government furniture to the Baldwin Public Schools (Lake County EC) this week. The State Office is in the process of obtaining permission to donate expended/excess computers to the school; however, we are still in the 90-day time limit in which other agencies can obtain them. Mae Locke also reports that the Single Family Housing Division has funded six 504 grants totaling \$10, 372 and one loan for \$2,500 in the EC.

North Delta (MS) Enterprise Community: A ceremony was held in Clarksdale to announce two projects in the North Delta Mississippi EC. A total of \$1,061,000 of loan/grant funds were awarded to the Town of Lambert for improvements to be made to the town's sewer system. The funds come from Rural Utility Service (RUS) funds. Also, a \$1,316,900 Community Facilities loan was made from Rural Housing Service funds to the Aaron E. Henry Health Services Center, Inc., for a rural health clinic.

Robeson County EC, NC: Robeson County has hired an EC Coordinator, Mrs. Cammie Fleury. Mrs. Fleury will perform the administrative and programmatic work for the Robeson Enterprise Community Program. The EC has drawn down the first Title XX money after signing the contract with the state.

An extensive leadership training project has been undertaken by the community. The training will be conducted by North Carolina A&T University in three different levels. The first training will be presented to trainers, the second to facilitators (existing leaders), and the third to the grassroots citizens (emerging leaders). The first training was held March 20-21 for members of the EC Executive Committee, residents from each census tract of the EC, and facilitators.

RECD has approved a Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) to the Town of Red Springs, located in the EC. The \$128,850 RBEG is to extend sewer service to Greystone Manor, a proposed eighty bed residential care facility for the elderly. The facility will provide 35 jobs to the community.

Halifax/Edgecombe/Wilson Rural EC, NC: Revisions in the EC's contract with the state for Title XX funds should be approved at the Board's April 17 meeting. This will allow them to draw down funds.

Greater Portsmouth EC, OH: Will serve as one of ten volunteer communities in the National EZ/EC Learning Initiative. The initiative will involve participation by Learning Teams (composed of stakeholders from the zones and communities, local citizens, and representatives from community organizations), local Learning Coordinators, Regional Researchers, the local EZ/EC Organization, national coordinators at the University of Tennessee, and representatives of

the USDA National Office. This group of team members will help to monitor and document the impact of the EZ/EC program. A significant benefit for the community is that their participation will allow opportunity for them to build the additional knowledge and capacity to do their own evaluation.

Southeast Oklahoma Enterprise Community: Residents of the Southeast Oklahoma Enterprise Community (SEOEC) and the executive director of the Lead Entity met with the District Director of the Small Business Administration in Oklahoma to discuss the placement of a One-Stop Capital Shop and Business Information Center in the SEOEC. The meeting took place on April 16 in Oklahoma City. The SEOEC also toured the Small Business Development Center and Business Information Center located in Oklahoma City as part of the Urban Enterprise Community. Residents of the SEOEC believe this meeting and discussion with their urban counterparts in Oklahoma City will help foster further economic development activity in designated Choctaw and McCurtain County census tracts.

The Southeast Oklahoma Enterprise Community (SEOEC) described tourism as a key element in their economic and social revitalization efforts. David Davies, former director of Tourism and Parks for the State of Oklahoma, was named as Tourism Director and immediately went to work to establish partnerships--one the four key principles in the Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Community Initiative.

The partnerships established include the Little Dixie Community Action Agency (the Lead Entity for the SEOEC) and the Choctaw County Historical Society for the operation of the Hugo Heritage Train and Hugo Railroad Museum and Depot. The SEOEC, the Lead Entity, the City of Hugo and the United States Corps of Engineers (Corps) also entered into a partnership for the lease of a Corps park on Lake Hugo.

Equally important in the partnership effort was the Rural Business Enterprise Grant that has made it possible to establish the Lake Hugo Marina. Future plans include a motel that will complement the tourism theme that is being crafted as a result of the strategic plan envisioned by the residents of Southeast Oklahoma Enterprise Community.

The Southeast Oklahoma Enterprise Community is working with the South Central Regional Technology Consortium (SCRTC) to provide assistance to improve student achievement through the integration of advanced technologies into instructional activities. The model emphasizes a strong collaborative relationship among the states as well as functional working relations with the states between universities, the state education agency, and local education agencies. The SCRTC is funded by the United States Department of Education. SCRTC is committed to providing special assistance to schools located in designated Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities.

Scott/McCreary EC, TN: On Wednesday, March 17, 1996 a delegation from Washington toured the Scott/McCreary EC. The delegation, organized by the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, was largely comprised of representatives of European Union countries, who were evaluating the empowerment concept. They were very impressed with the way that the EC experience was working, especially how different levels of government were

working together with the citizens and private sector of the EC. Their main objective was to see if the EC concept could be applied in a united Europe. From their questions, it was apparent they were very knowledgeable of the factors involved in getting different levels of government to work together, the power sharing difficulties with diverse groups, and the financial, logistical, and administrative problems inherent in the process.

Tennessee Valley Authority sponsored the tour, but the group was given the perspective of each level by Bruce Murphy, Deputy Judge Executive in McCreary County for the local government; Representative Les Winningham, TN State Representative for state government; Rural Development, USDA representatives Bob Lovan, Jim Letcher, Kentucky; and Tom Mayberry, Tennessee for the federal government.

Beadle/Spink EC (BASEC), SD: Sherbanoo Aziz, a former National Office staff member currently on detail to the North Dakota State Office and serving as Desk Officer for Rural Economic Area Partnership (REAP), reports that on April 24, the Board of Directors of BASEC will host annual event at which the citizens of the EC are invited to speak out about successes of BASEC, as well as raise issues or barriers, if any.

Accomack/Northampton EC, Virginia: The National Association of Development Organizations advises it plans to write about the Northampton County's Sustainable Technologies Industrial Park in an upcoming digest. The Park site will be at the Port of Cape Charles, located on the Chesapeake Bay. Not only is it an ideal site because of its proximity to major east coast markets, multi-modal transportation facilities, and central water supply and treatment, but it also has aesthetic amenities. The Port of Cape Charles is within the Accomack-Northampton Enterprise Community! There is a good chance the site will become a prototype of a World-Model Industrial Facility.

Central Appalachia Empowerment Zone EC, WV: CAEZ has been awarded a Small Cities Block Grant in the amount of \$500,000 by WV Governor Gaston Caperton. This is part of the recently established Communities First Program in West Virginia. With this funding the CAEZ plans to create a loan pool primarily for start-up enterprises to assist with gap financing. In addition, the CAEZ plans to hire a private consulting firm to conduct a feasibility study in an attempt to identify five industrial sites within the Enterprise Community.

McDowell County EC, (McCAN) WV: McCAN is the latest community to publish a newsletter, an impressive one with the upbeat and positive title of "Prosperity Press." Its subtitle is equally upbeat "McCAN-Rebuilding for the Next Generation." The lead article reports on the status and financing for a project to establish a transitional housing facility in McDowell County. Construction of the facility is about to begin with a completion date of six to eight months. When completed, the shelter facility will provide all the essential components that will lead children and families to self-sufficiency. These include housing, job training, education, family counseling and economic development, all of which are necessary for the long-term viability and survivability of McDowell County.



Rural Community Update for May, 1996

USDA, Rural Development Office of Community Development

Watsonville EC, CA: New small business incubator supports 4 new retail businesses, plans 8 more; California Champions receive technical assistance and AmeriCorps attention.

Jackson County, Florida, EC: Executive Director selected; Earmarked funds requested to establish a revolving loan fund program.

Kentucky Highlands EZ: Highly successful Cyber Ed visit spurs school districts; Construction on a \$1.9 million houseboat manufacturing facility will begin in Mid-May.

Scott (TN)- McCreary, (KY) EC: Major fundraiser held to enlarge the home building and home improvement program in the SMART area.

North East Louisiana, EC: USDA earmarked fund applications: (1) to expand small businesses and to provide training, (2) to support the purchase of a building to provide space for revolving loan program, a computer learning center and adult literacy program.

Halifax/Edgecombe/Wilson Rural EC, NC: Executive Director applications reviewed.

Greater Portsmouth EC, OH: \$1,375,000 to Scioto County to extend sewer service; \$99,000 RBEG, \$140,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Development, a \$100,000 grant from the New Boston Coke Corporation, and EC funds of \$101,000 will replace a dangerously deteriorated rail spur; \$60,000 grant, presented to Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC) to help fund a new Synergy Center. Southeastern Oklahoma, EC: Home health care agency creates 10 quality jobs and provides quality health care; opening of the Bluff Community Center and the reopening of the Soper, Nutrition Center are celebrated.

Josephine County EC, OR: EC receives \$1,836,000 loan and \$1,338,900 grant to upgrade sewer; \$344,000 RBEG grant to remodel a historic store for museum complex.

City of Lock Haven EC, PA: Economic development, education, and community development programs funded. 5-year technical training benchmarks exceeded in first four months.

Beadle and Spink, EC: Annual event reports on all the progress, barriers and projects underway in the communities.

Fayette/Haywood, TN: Innovative Work Force Development plan set for July kickoff.

Scott/McCreary (SMART) EC: Major industrial prospect wooed, entrepreneurial seminars planned, and state tourism execs hosted.

Rio Grande Valley EZ, TX: Hildalgo County EZ Coordinator attends EZ/EC Child Care Roundtable, shares project VIDA.

La Jicarita, NM EC: "Festival of Renewal" held, other ECs and EZs participate too.

Lower Yakima County, WA EC: Two new businesses break ground.

McDowell County (McCAN), WV: Summer Food Service Program flexibility request granted by USDA's Food and Consumer Service.

May 1996 Rural EZ/EC Happenings

Watsonville EC, CA: Watsonville EC held opening ceremonies for its small business incubator, which is envisioned as a commercial and cultural center. Four new retail businesses opened, and another eight are planning to join them in the next several weeks. The owners of these businesses were among 19 individuals who participated in an 8-week training session sponsored by the Pajaro Community Development Corporation. Participants learned basic business skills, wrote business plans, and received assistance in seeking funding.

Ms. Toni Symonds, California Rural Development Enterprise Community Coordinator, visited the Community and three Champion Communities in the company of Mr. Joel Berg, Director of the Office of National Services, during the week of May 6-9.

Ms. Toni Symonds, California Rural Development Enterprise Community Coordinator, visited the Community and three Champion Communities in the company of Mr. Joel Berg, Director of the Office of National Services, during the week of May 6-9. Joel Berg and Toni Symonds met with representatives from the youth component of the Strategic Plan developed by the Enterprise Community. At-risk youth and gang prevention activities in the EC area were discussed. A theater workshop with at-risk youth, directed by the AmeriCorps volunteer in the EC was also reviewed. Mr. Berg also announced Secretary Glickman's recruitment for the Summer of Gleaning.

Hollister, CA Champion Community: Mr. Berg visited a Youth Center that is being renovated by the AmeriCorps member and Champion Community volunteers.

King's County, CA Champion Community. Mr. Berg, Director of the Office of National Services, announced Secretary Glickman's recruitment opening for the Summer of Gleaning Program.

Jackson County, Florida, EC: Selected an Executive Director and has submitted a request for earmarked funds to establish a revolving loan fund program.

Kentucky Highlands EZ: ED TECH: On May 7, 1996, a big 18 wheel rig named "ED" rolled into the parking lot at Jackson County High School. The truck, which will remain in the Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone the remainder of the week, is a key element of the Cyber Ed program, an unprecedented effort to bring technology training directly to teachers, students and community leaders. Hands-on Internet and advanced on-line communications training will be provided. Cyber Ed was created in support of the White House initiative to foster public-private partnerships to improve educational resources in economically disadvantaged areas. Throughout the summer the Cyber Ed program will visit schools in 15 designated Empowerment Zones across the country. Kentucky Highland's Educational Technology Task Force met on Friday May 24th. Representatives from all 4 school Districts were present, Jackson, Clinton, Wayne, and Monticello. Also on hand were representatives from KHIC, AEL, ARSI and from the Kentucky Center for Rural Development. They reviewed the highly successful Cyber Ed visit and decided they were going to work on the educational technology initiative as a group rather than as separate

districts. In addition to reviewing the Cyber Ed visit the group began making plans for implementation of the initiative once computers become available. In the meantime we're working with GSA toward that end.

Construction on a \$1.9 million houseboat manufacturing facility will begin in Mid-May. The 30,000 square-foot facility is scheduled to open in the fall of 1996. The company will initially employ 20 people, and by the third year of operation is projecting to employ another 50 people. The average wage will be \$7.85 per hour, and is slightly higher than the average manufacturing wage in the area. John Sturgill, the company's owner, noted that he is opening his shop in the Zone because of the Federal Empowerment Program.

Scott (TN)- McCreary, (KY) EC: The SMART HOME Committee met with the Directors of Appalachia Habitat for Humanity and fundraising representatives concerning a major fundraiser to enlarge the home building and home improvement program in the SMART area. Leslie Winningham will serve on the financial oversight committee for the project. Mr. Winningham attended the HUD sponsored video conference in Nashville, Tennessee on NOFA's and the priority given to EZ/EC's.

North East Louisiana, EC: Applied for earmarked funds: (1) to expand small businesses and to provide training, (2) to support the purchase of a building to provide space for revolving loan program, a computer learning center and adult literacy program. The EC has also submitted a request for a revolving loan fund.

Halifax/Edgecombe/Wilson Rural EC, NC: The Community has begun reviewing applications in search of an Executive Director.

Greater Portsmouth EC, OH: Mr. John Romano, Deputy Administrator for Rural Utilities Service, was in Portsmouth, Ohio, on Wednesday, May 1. He announced the awarding of \$1,375,000 to Scioto County to extend sewer service in the West Portsmouth area. A Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) in the amount of \$99,000 was also announced. This grant along with a \$140,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Development, a \$100,000 grant from the New Boston Coke Corporation, and EC funds of \$101,000 will be used to remove and replace a dangerously deteriorated rail spur.

Mr. Romano also announced a \$60,000 RBEG grant for the Champion Community, Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRCD). OVRCD will use the money to develop the Synergy Center which was designed to promote and assist business in Scioto and surrounding counties.

Among several area projects which recently received USDA Funding is a \$60,000 grant, presented to Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC) to help fund a new Synergy Center. The OVRDC is developing a consulting network to provide technical assistance to plastic companies and information to business and manufacturing companies and wood product firms. An important link in this network is The Ohio Valley Plastics Partnership (OVPP) which has already been established. The Synergy Center will expand and enhance the capacities of the OVRDC and plastics related companies in the Appalachian

region. More than 40 plastic companies exist in the tri-state target area with numerous primary and secondary value-added wood products manufacturers, more than five cast iron manufacturers and numerous metal working and chemical manufacturing industries. With the formation of the OVPP, any individual or organization with a computer and modem can dial into the network through an Internet access provider and find information or communicate with people all over the world. Expansion at first will cover only Adams, Lawrence and Scioto counties, then expand into other areas.

Southeastern Oklahoma, EC: The Boswell Home Health Care Agency, has created 10 quality jobs in this West Choctaw County census tract in addition to providing quality health care in the Enterprise Community. The Health Care Agency is located in a building purchased through the efforts of the Enterprise Community to create jobs, generate sustainable community development and enhance the rural health care delivery system.

Residents of the Southeastern Oklahoma EC celebrated the opening of the Bluff Community Center on May 4, 1996. Located in the EC, 4 miles south of Hugo and 11 miles west of the West Choctaw County Census Tract, the Red Bluff Center will house youth and nutrition programs, community awareness activities, and senior citizens' programs.

The Soper Oklahoma Nutrition Center, perilously close to closing after losing much needed funding, is once again serving meals in this Southeast Oklahoma Enterprise Community town. With the infusion of \$33,000 of Social Service Block Grant funds, the Soper Nutrition Center is now serving 35 to 50 meals per week after falling to less than 20 per week. Soper, Oklahoma is located in the West Choctaw County census tract.

Josephine County EC, OR: Victor Vasquez, Acting Deputy Administrator for Community Development visited the Josephine County Enterprise Community on May 30. He presented two award checks to the community - for sewer system improvements and a Rural Business Enterprise Grant. Inadequate infrastructure is a major problem in the EC, and the community will receive a \$1,836,000 loan and \$1,338,900 grant to upgrade their sewer facility. The \$344,000 RBEG grant will help remodel a historic store and convert it into a museum complex. Historic cabins will be relocated adjacent to the museum and will provide 10 business sites for individual entrepreneurs.

City of Lock Haven EC, PA: EC is using its Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funds to help fund programs centered on economic development, education, and community development according to Ms. Maria Boileau, Enterprise Community Coordinator.

SSBG funds totaling \$150,000 have been earmarked to help small and start-up businesses through a revolving loan fund. Loans of up to \$25,000 are available. The first loan was made to the Roxy Theater to finance improvements to the theater's heating system. Ms. Boileau states that there are currently 22 other businesses interested in the program.

Using \$130,000 of SSBG plus another \$342,500 from other Federal, state, and local sources, the West Branch Technology Center is offering technical training to local businesses, industries, and individuals. The center has had an overwhelming response to its programs,

reaching benchmarks set for the first two years of operation in the first several months.

Beadle and Spink, EC: The annual event held in Iroquois, a site in one of the counties in the EC, was an event that reported on all the projects underway in the communities. The progress as well as the barriers that are slowing down progress were covered candidly. So as to make time to cover all the issues, the State Director with his staff, the executive board members and Cornelia Flora (evening's key speaker) held a 2-hour meeting earlier in his office in Huron. At this meeting the barriers and issues were raised in detail. Dr. Flora's report has captured and summarized the presentations.

Fayette/Haywood, TN: Haywood County could be a trend setter with its work Force Development plan which was developed by Jackson State University. Most of the thrust of the innovative training program, which will begin in July, will be developing workplace, motivation and ethics, problem solving and life skills as well as academic, technical and employability skills. The Work Force Development Program is designed to foster resiliency skills and to increase self-esteem and self-awareness of the chronically unemployed.

Scott/McCreary (SMART) EC: The Chairperson of the SMART Works Committee and the Industrial Development Board met with a major industrial prospect and discussed many aspects of expanding to the SMART area. Negotiations are continuing. Members of the Committee also met with representatives of the Tennessee State Planning Office to plan entrepreneurial seminars sponsored by SMART.

The Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Oneida, two essential partners with SMART (Scott/McCreary Action Revitalization Team), sponsored the Tourism Sub-Committee's visit with the Tennessee Commissioner of Tourism. A meeting was held with the Scott Development Council to develop leadership and coordination of efforts in industrial recruiting and add-value business development.

Rio Grande Valley EZ, TX: On April 24, Gracie Guzman, Hidalgo County EZ Coordinator visited Washington, D.C., to participate in an EZ/EC Child Care Roundtable. The Roundtable was sponsored by: Child Care Bureau Administration on Children, Youth, and Families Administration for Children and Families, with additional support from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss with communities how their child care needs were being addressed, share experiences implementing child care initiatives and discuss future goal setting and measuring results. Ms. Guzman brought the participants up to speed on the RGVZ Project VIDA, and the related human service issues. She also stopped by to personally introduce herself to the Rural Development Team. Additional and follow-up information will be available from the HHS EZ/EC Central Support Team.

La Jicarita, NM EC: Victor Vasquez, Acting Deputy Administrator for Community Development, participated in a "Festival of Renewal" with members of the La Jicarita Enterprise Community Board and staff members on May 15 and 16. Mr. Vasquez visited with residents of the northern New Mexico Enterprise Community on May 15 and participated in a Festival of Renewal Workshop on May 16 in Santa Fe. Among the other

participants in the workshop were board members from the designated Empowerment Zone in the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas and the Southeaster Oklahoma Enterprise Community. Shared successes, obstacles, and the Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community key principles were part of the dialogue during the one-day workshop.

Lower Yakima County, WA EC: Victor Vasquez visited the EC to discuss USDA resources and local needs with community leaders. The EC organized a tour of the area focusing on key Strategic Plan benchmarks: education/job skills training, housing needs and infrastructure development.

The Lower Yakima County Rural Enterprise Community has attracted two new businesses. Snipes Mountain Brew Pub, a microbrewery, held its ground breaking ceremony last week. The company will create an upscale value-added food products and provide 15 full-time, year round jobs. Yakima County is the #1 hops growing region in the nation. Another company, Truss Systems, is also constructing a facility and will open at the end of the year. Truss will provide 25 new jobs for the community and contribute to the economic diversification of the area.

McDowell County (McCAN), WV: Earlier this month the RD State Director requested assistance in obtaining a waiver so that McCAN could operate up to 75 feeding sites this summer. Current regulations restrict non-profit entities to no more than 20 sites per sponsor. USDA's Food and Consumer Service granted the waiver albeit subject to certain conditions, but the bottom line is that a number of West Virginia children who otherwise would have gone hungry this summer will be able to benefit from the Summer Food Service Program.



Rural Community Update for June, 1996

USDA, Rural Development Office of Community Development

East Central Arkansas EC: Kellogg Foundation meeting; EC sponsors another grant-writing workshop.

Watsonville EC, CA: The AmeriCorps Summer of Gleaning Members were formally presented to the Watsonville City Council; Students complete job skills training; RBEG grant provides entrepreneurial capital.

Imperial County EC, CA: New small business development center operates at full capacity; ISTE Forum attended; \$1 million received for revolving loan fund and library networking.

Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone (KHEZ): First rural One-Stop Capital Shop opens for business; Researcher visits KHEZ; Gleaning makes USA Today; GAO visits area.

Scott/McCreary Counties, TN/KY EC: SBA conducts Business Development Week;

Lake County, MI EC: \$4.9 million for courthouse and jail renovations obligated; \$2 million IRP awarded for business loan fund.

Williamsburg County, SC EC: The Peddinghaus Manufacturing Company locates in Williamsburg County near Andrews; SBA holds small business meeting; New Executive Director named for EC.

Fayette/Haywood, TN EC: \$350,000 grant funds business development loans, recipients pleased.

Scott/McCreary (SMART), TN EC: Representatives of SMART made presentations to school groups regarding the Strategic plan and related goals in environment and economic development presented to school groups; Tennessee Technology Center breaks ground.

Lower Yakima County, WA Rural EC: Resource and Information Program held for community members.

CAEZ, WV EC: New ambulance from EC grant unveiled in dedication ceremony at hospital.

June 1996 Rural EZ/EC Happenings

EC to EC Technical Assistance: The North Delta, Mississippi, EC is planning a second visit to the East Central Arkansas EC sometime during the week of June 24-28, 1996. The first visit occurred on May 10 when members of the North Delta EC board and a representative from Congressman Benny Thompson's office spent the day with the East Central EC to share information and learn more about their organizational structure and operating practices. The second visit will focus on board member responsibilities and building organizational capacity. Also, to be discussed are their mutual interests in agriculture-related development and farmer cooperatives.

East Central Arkansas EC: Willette Romius, Executive Director, met with the Kellogg Foundation to discuss how they might be able to assist in developing a regional rural initiative.

On June 15, the EC held another grant writing workshop. Freeman McKendra of the Rockefeller Foundation, and Sherri Pugh of the MidSouth Foundation will be participating. To help promote the workshop and other EC activities, Willette had a 10 minute interview broadcasted by radio station KXJK.

Watsonville EC, CA: The Americorps Summer of Gleaning Members were formally presented to the Watsonville City Council.

A group of 20 students are completing an 8-week job skills training course. This is the test run of a program to combat youth unemployment. The EC plans to continue the program and possibly expand it to include multiple tracks.

On Friday, June 14, Under Secretary Jill Long Thompson announced a \$300,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant to the City of Watsonville. The RBEG funds will supplement Watsonville's Small Business Loan Program, which supports entrepreneurial activities by providing access to capital and technical assistance. This program is a key component of Watsonville's economic development component of its strategic plan.

Under Secretary Thompson also swore in the two Summer of Gleaning AmeriCorps members. During the 12-week program the AmeriCorps members will work with the Second Harvest Food Bank and F.O.O.D. Crops to glean an additional one-half million pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables to help feed 5,000 people.

Imperial County EC, CA: Last month, the EC opened a small business development center in Calexico, and the center is now operating at full capacity. The center offers one on one counseling, low cost seminars and other business assistance. Most of its services are free of charge.

The EC participated in a Regional Forum regarding reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). The Regional Forum highlighted border crossing and NAFTA issues. EC representatives met with Transportation Secretary Federico Pena and

Senator Barbara Boxer to discuss border infrastructure impacts and financing. A new US/Mexico port-of-entry will be opened near Calexico later this year.

On Monday, June 24, Imperial County received nearly \$1 million from the USDA Rural Development Program. The award includes a \$700,000 loan which will be used for small business loans, a \$200,000 grant to establish a small business revolving loan fund, and another \$20,000 grant will connect local libraries to the Small Business Development Center in El Centro.

Kings County (CC), CA: On Saturday, June 8th, Congressman Cal Dooley swore in the four Summer of Gleaning Americorps members. During the 12-week program, the Americorps members will be working with the Kings County Community Action Agency, the Salvation Army, and the Fresno Food Resources to replicate successful gleaning programs in neighboring counties. Kings County's goal for the summer is to feed 500 people, retain 10 committed volunteers, and develop at least eight food resources.

Hanford Champion Community, CA: The Americorps Summer of Gleaning Members began a media campaign on gleaning by contacting local television, radio, newspapers. Members also attended the County Fair and distributed flyers on the Summer of Gleaning Program and recruitment of volunteers.

Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone (KHEZ): Saturday, June 15 will mark the official opening of the One-Stop Capital Shop at the Center for Rural Development on the campus of the Somerset Community College. The Shop, which will offer counseling and other resources to entrepreneurs and would be small business owners, is the first in Kentucky and the first in rural America. Roughly 40 counties in southern and southeastern Kentucky will be served but with a focus on the KHEZ communities. Future plans include setting up remote offices in the three KHEZ counties and possibly in McCreary County (KY) which partners with Scott County in Tennessee to form the SMART Enterprise Community.

Dr. Cornelia Flora, Iowa State University, visited Kentucky on May 23-24, 1996. Dr. Flora had interviews with the Lead Entity, representative(s) of the county Zone Committees, a representative of state government and Rural development personnel. Dr. Flora was gathering information for her comprehensive evaluation report of the EZ/EC Initiatives. On May 24, 1996, she visited Jackson County to interview local zone residents.

The June 25 edition of USA Today, on its "News From the States" page under Kentucky reported on the activities of Americorps members in Monticello (Wayne County) in support of the "Gleaming" initiative. Wayne County is one of the three counties in the Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone.

First in signing its MOA, first in drawing down EZ funds, first to have an OIG Audit; now the Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone has the First visit from the General Accounting Office (GAO). The GAO is reviewing how the EZ/EC initiative has worked and how it is presently working. Representatives from GAO arrived in Kentucky on May 31 and exited on June 7, 1996.

Scott/McCreary Counties, TN/KY EC: The Small Business Administration (SBA) conducted a Business Development Week in the Enterprise Community of Scott County, Tennessee and McCreary County, Kentucky (SMART) on June 17-21, 1996. A kick-off luncheon was held in Oneida, Tennessee, on the 17th. In attendance were Thomas G. Fern and David Seivers, Rural Development State Directors for Kentucky and Tennessee, and James A. Letcher, and Tom Mayberry, Rural Development Coordinators for Kentucky and Tennessee. Other State and local officials were in attendance, along with representatives from the Tennessee Valley Authority and SBA. The purpose of the meeting was to explain to lenders and the EC people the various Federal loan programs available for business and industry. A forum was held in the afternoon to answer various questions concerning these Government programs.

Lake County, MI EC: Mae Locke, EZ/EC Coordinator, announced that the Michigan State Rural Development Office obligated \$4.9 million for courthouse and jail renovations in the Lake County Enterprise Community. Also, the \$2 million IRP awarded to FiveCap, Inc., the EC's lead entity, is scheduled to close on July 8. FiveCap, Inc., will spend \$1.5 million of this loan in the EC.

Roosevelt-Custer REAP Zone, ND: On May 29, Don Warren, Reservation and Rural Community Outreach Chief, and Sherbanoo Aziz, Rural Development Specialist, participated in the Local Advisory Group's (LAG) meeting of the Roosevelt Custer REAP Zone in Dickinson, North Dakota. Decision was taken to establish the process for formalizing the Steering Committee to replace the ad hoc LAG, total community participation in the process was assured, and a commitment was made to begin the bench marking process at the end of summer.

CONAC REAP Zone, Burlington, ND: On May 30, Don Warren and Sherbanoo Aziz visited three members of the CONAC Zone LAG committee in Burlington, North Dakota. The LAG has formalized into the Steering Committee and has begun the bench marking process. CONAC expects to complete the bench marks by the end June and submit it for review to the Rural Development office in North Dakota.

Williamsburg County, SC EC: The Peddinghaus Manufacturing Company will locate in Williamsburg County near Andrews. This \$7 million facility will add 50 new jobs to Williamsburg County. Cooperation between state officials, the Williamsburg County delegation, and local leadership made this partnership possible. Peddinghaus will manufacture machine tools for the steel industry. "Virtually every major construction project in the world involves Peddinghaus equipment. One current example is the new Olympic Stadium for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta."

On July 7/19 - Williamsburg, S.C. EC will hold a joint SBA meeting on small business with Phil Lader, Administrator, SBA. The SBA will advise the EC on SBA programs and entrepreneurial opportunities. USDA's Office of Rural Development will present its programs for lending and business development.

Ms. Faith Williams was appointed the new Executive Director for Williamsburg-Lake City

EC. Ms. Williams is a Washington, D.C. resident, and native of South Carolina. Ms. Williams attended the National Office weekly staff meeting, met with Norm Reid, Acting Associate Deputy Administrator, OCD and Rick Wetherill, Acting Director, Empowerment Division, for an EZ/EC briefing and was introduced to regional desk officers.

Fayette/Haywood, TN EC: A grant in the amount of \$350,000 was made to the Enterprise Community to provide funds for business development loans. A newspaper article reporting on the award quoted a recipient of a loan who said his business is reaping the benefits of the loan it received last year; built a new plant, added new product lines and increased workforce from five to 12 employees. He said that the growth was easier than what it would have been with a traditional loan.

Scott/McCreary (SMART), TN EC: Representatives of SMART made presentations to school groups regarding the strategic plan and related goals as they pertain to the environment and economic development.

A ground breaking was held for the new Tennessee Technology Center which will be a vital partner in planning, training and development of a significant educational component of SMART's strategic plan. In addition to SMART representatives also in attendance at the ceremony were representatives of the center itself and the Tennessee Board of Regents.

Lower Yakima County, WA Rural EC: On Wednesday, June 19, the EC held a Resource and Information Program for community members. Approximately 50 citizens attended, and the event received good local media coverage. The event was designed to educate the community about the purpose and benefits of EC designation and to stimulate more interest and involvement. Representatives of several Federal agencies were present to provide information on the resources available to the EC.

CAEZ, WV EC: A dedication ceremony was held recently at Spencer Hospital to celebrate the arrival of a new ambulance in the Newton area of the Central Appalachia Empowerment Zone (CAEZ) Enterprise Community. Whatever qualities the good people of CAEZ have, patience has to be pretty close to the top of the list. The community has been trying for 22 years to establish an ambulance service. Thanks to a grant from CAEZ their patience has finally been awarded.